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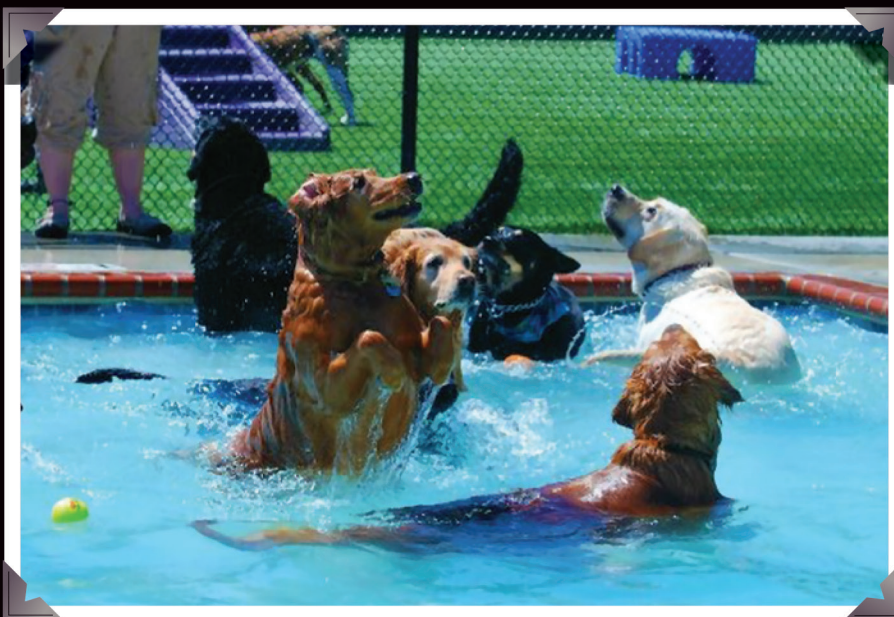
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# CONTENTS

**LAVENDER**

## FEATURE: FALL GETAWAYS

- 24** South Dakota: Art in the Plains
- 26** The Hoods of Columbus
- 30** Getaway on a Breeze
- 38** Thrifty Traveler: See the World

## OUR LAVENDER

- 8** From the Editor
- 10** A Word in Edgewise
- 12** Lavender Lens

## OUR SCENE

- 16** Arts: Spotlight
- 20** Sports: MLB's Billy Bean

## OUR HOMES

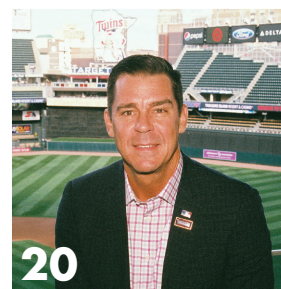
- 42** Ride Review: 2016 Volvo XC60

## OUR RESOURCES

- 46** The Network
- 48** Community Connections
- 50** Classifieds

## OUR VOICES

- 45** Trolin

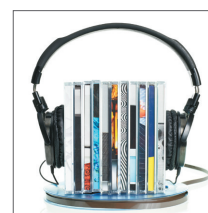


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## ON THE COVER

Before the snow starts flying, plan a fall getaway. Models: Lamar Jefferson, Will Cummings, Cyrus Heegard (dog). Photo by Mike Hnida

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# Celluloid Getaway

I know films are digital now, but don't you just love the word "celluloid"? Say it out loud a few times. Like "cursive" and "stegosaurus," it's a word that might slip into the realm of conceptual comprehension rather than actual application. When I think of it, I can hear a projector running, I can smell buttered popcorn, and I can see light flickering toward a screen. Nostalgia and the hope of getting away from things for a bit.

Films and movies are still very much a getaway for me. Being that they're on demand on my Smart TV via Netflix and Hulu and Amazon, it's easier to get away from my chair in my living room than leave the comfort of my home. But, that's not where I can get the experience of being immersed in a new (and perhaps envelope-pushing) movie that is part of a curated collection for the express purpose of displaying a certain theme or group of people or set of ideas. No, we have film festivals for that such reason. And we have a few coming up that you might find of interest.

## Dan Savage's 11th Annual HUMP! Film Festival

Sept. 22–24

St. Anthony Main Theatre, Minneapolis

[www.humpfilmfest.com](http://www.humpfilmfest.com)

Growing up in Minnesota in a conservative Christian community, I am pleased to include porn in my list of film festivals. I'm a live-and-let-live kind of gal who is all about sex-positivity for those who are interested. And who better to look to for sex-positivity than Dan Savage, the writer behind the sex column "Savage Love"? Dan had an unconventional idea back in 2005 and asked people to send him "home-made dirty movies," and, surprisingly, they did. "His mailbox was brimming with films so hot, so hilarious, and diverse that he felt compelled to share them with the world." As such, the HUMP! Film Festival is the only place to see "creative, homegrown porn. The films are a cornucopia of body sizes, shapes, ages, colors, sexualities, genders, kinks, and fetishes, all under the welcoming umbrella of sex-positivity and sexual expression. First and foremost HUMP! is about acceptance, and the festival is re-defining conventional 'porn,' one audience at a time." It's a festival that travels around the country, and you can catch it in Minneapolis.

## 6th Annual Gender Reel Minneapolis Film & Performance Art Festival

Sept. 26, Oct. 6, Oct. 13

Minneapolis

[www.genderreelfest.com](http://www.genderreelfest.com)

Gender Reel Minneapolis 2016 will be showcasing 16 amazing documentary and narrative short and feature films as well as also holding two Q&As, an art show, and several performances. Kicking off at Hell's Kitchen on September 26, opening night will include a premiere screening of the new film *Major! A new documentary film*. Quinn "Shimmer" Villagomez, a well-known Hispanic woman of transgender experience, will play host to "an evening of unique performance pieces, innovative art displays and a Q&A with Twin Cities-based trans-identified women." The second night of all closed captioned and/or subtitled screenings will celebrate a range of trans and gender non-conforming identities and experiences — a night of desire, domination and discovery — at Trylon Microcinema. Closing night, October 13 at Trylon Microcinema, will

conclude the festival with more fine films as well as a Q&A with drag kings Xander, Damien D'Luxe and Ethan Prince.

## 9th Annual Flyway Film Festival

Oct. 19–23

Mississippi River towns of Pepin, Stockholm, and Alma, Wisconsin, and Red Wing, Minnesota

[www.flywayfilmfestival.org](http://www.flywayfilmfestival.org)

Flyway is a "scrappy, ambitious film festival" that has featured an eclectic assortment of movies and attracted national attention for its creative spirit and its willingness to invite emerging filmmakers to share their work. According to the festival's website, 2016's festival will include more happy hours and films, a new venue at the Villa Bellezza Winery, and screenings at the historic Sheldon Theatre in Red Wing, bridging over from Wisconsin to Minnesota. The festival founder Rick Vaicius said, "We're streamlining some things, adding others. And our film line-up this year is pretty amazing," including stunningly beautiful narratives, disturbing documentaries, hilarious and moving short films, and, in a nod to the upcoming election, some untold political stories. "There's a special emphasis on lore and legend, including films about Minnesota and Wisconsin," added Vaicius. "We're featuring some of our best regional filmmakers as well."

## Project Q

[www.projectqdocumentary.com](http://www.projectqdocumentary.com)

Not quite a film festival, but definitely worthy of more than a fair bit of the spotlight, is a documentary that has recently been completed featuring 10 "LGBTQ performance artists living and working in the Twin Cities and showcasing the vibrant and supportive arts community that is unique to Minneapolis." The premiere of the film was at the end of August, but I hope you put it on your radar and watch for it to show up for viewings on the local scene. Sarah McPeck, a comedian and spoken word artist who grew up in Wisconsin, tells her story as well as those of Kevin "Kaoz" Moore, Adonia Kyle, TifDynamite, Maggie Farris, DJ Shannon Blowtorch, Mayda, Heather Spear, Cee Cee Russell, and Nicolas Martell with the help of Lauren Hughes and Tam Smith. Knowing the challenges faced by artists are plentiful, this film showcases the words and experiences of these talented people who have faced those challenges head on and also claimed their power as members of this community to propel them forward. They are inspiring and empowering. Through Project Q, "We hope our story will open up a world to other queer folks of all backgrounds and inspire them to foster their creativity and originality. With all the challenges that the LGBTQ population faces today, everyone can use a glimmer of hope and inspiration — we hope our film will provide a little burst of glitter to you!"

Go. Have yourself a getaway on a screen that isn't on your phone or in your living room. Take part in a Q&A with a filmmaker or local personality. Get some glitter on you.

I'll see you in the seats.

With you and with thanks,

Andy ■





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# Boys Will Be Boys — For How Long?

However tacky or tawdry, one might see glossing over high jinks of actual youngsters, say, 16- to 18-year-old athletes, who are far away from home, and hyped from their Olympic competitions. Over-imbibing, a hangover — that's how we learn.

But swimmer Ryan Lochte? A 32-year-old man who has travelled widely for his sport over the past decade? Who not only caroused until 6 a.m., which is his choice, but who, after causing some vandalism, concocted a tale claiming that he and his friends had been victims of an armed robbery?

When discovered, he said, "I want to apologize for my behavior last weekend, for not being more careful and candid in how I described the events of that early morning." "Candid"? How about "truthful"?

Fellow U.S. swimmer Jimmy Feigen later admitted to NBC news, "I omitted the facts that we urinated behind the building and that Ryan Lochte pulled a poster off the wall," adding, "I was trying to protect my teammates and for this I apologize."

As globally embarrassing as the Lochte incident was, there were consequences for Lochte: millions lost in endorsements from four longtime

sponsors who dropped him when his lie was revealed. But his initial attempt at bluffing his way out, playing the Entitled White Athlete card is evidence of more serious incidents happening here at home.

There are ongoing news reports of boys (at least the white, athletic, college-bound ones) getting away with rape and assault here in the States. The widely publicized case of Brock Turner who was given only six months for sexual assault; Massachusetts high schooler David Becker, recently let off after raping two unconscious 18-year-olds so that he can enjoy his "college experience" without having to register as a sex offender, and Nicholas Fifield, teen tennis star, who sexually assaulted an autistic woman, receiving only a plea deal. An attorney in his case opined, "Prison would not do this kid any good," a comment all too reminiscent of the judge in the Turner case who claimed that a prison sentence "would have a severe impact" on the "boy."

There is never any mention of what lies ahead for the young women involved, who may spend years to a lifetime dealing with being treated as disposable objects. ■

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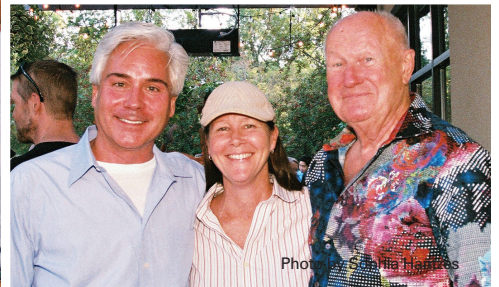
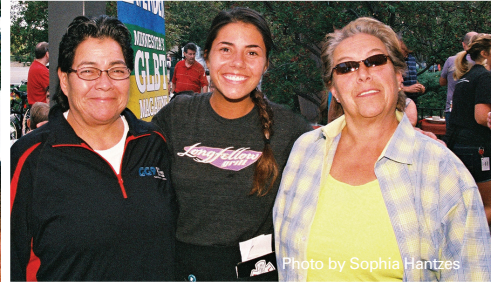
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Michael Elyanow's archetypal drama derives from the Greek legend of Medea. It delves into the problem of having a good adult life after having endured a rough childhood. What are the odds of being able to love, heal, and hope? The contemporary American setting includes gay content.

Jim Lichtscheidl comments, "The character I play, The Sheriff, is a gay man who lives and works in Stonington, Maine. He and his partner run the town together as co-sheriffs. One of the aspects of his character is to serve as a positive role model for the brother character, who has been traumatized early in life and desperately needs someone to tell him he is worthy of love and can allow it into his life once more."

### RISE UP, O MEN

Through Nov. 13  
Plymouth Playhouse, 2705 Annapolis Lane N, Plymouth  
763-553-1600  
[www.plymouthplayhouse.com](http://www.plymouthplayhouse.com)

Plays that set out to entertain are often denigrated nowadays because they don't fall into politically correct guidelines that set out to promote concepts like social justice and diversity. The enormously popular *Church Basement Ladies* musical comedies, which actually have female creativity as the very source of their creation, don't even get remotely close to a soapbox. The popular series stems from work by humorists Janet Letness Martin and Suzann Nelson, with various scripts written and co-written by Greta Grosch.

The latest *Church Basement* creation, *Rise Up, O Men* is set in 1964. That zany Lutheran ladies trio we've grown fond of is back with corny jokes, touching moments, and vividly rendered characterizations. This time they are up against a real menace: those darned men folk have come into their basement to pitch in for the local centennial celebration. And it is annoying the ladies

royally! Especially the eternally ironic Vivian played by hilariously deadpan Janet Paone. Her operatically charged *Disaster* is a high point and a side of this great comic actress I have never seen or heard before. It's also the best of the engaging homespun songs by Jeff Curley.

A vibrant Grosch once again plays the handy Mavis. She recalls sitcom icon Ann B. Davis. Dorian Chalmers's Karin pulls the heartstrings as she frets about her daughter leaving home to attend the U of M. Some may be disappointed that there are no drawn-out complaints about a safe space for women. But if this show has any message at all, it may be that we can choose to get along or not.

The men delight as well with strong performances by Jeff March, Peter Colburn, and Tim Drake. March also has a cheesy cross-gender turn as Arlene.

Curt Wollan has directed with madcap flair. Writers Grosch, Curley, and Graydon Royce have found warmth and wit beneath the goofiness. Imagine a basement kitchen recipe mixed with the styles of Horton Foote, the *Keystone Cops*, and Anton Chekhov. With Minnesota spice added liberally!



*The Children.* Photo by Bruce Silcox

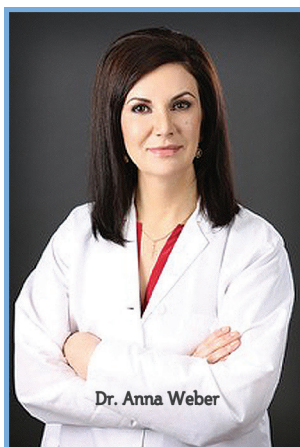




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[www.guthrietheater.org](http://www.guthrietheater.org)

Maren Ward co-founded the grass roots-driven Bedlam Theatre. Her social consciousness is real and unpretentious in a time when there are so many pretenders to that. She has been leading St. Stephens Human Services zAmya Theater Project which addresses the dire needs of homeless people, displacement, and the housing crisis. It launches the Guthrie's Level 9 Initiative.

It's too easy for Twin Cities dwellers to block out income and access issues and relegate them to something that happens to someone else. However, when you look at all the construction during this pre-Super Bowl period, don't think it doesn't have a price tag for ordinary citizens. Ask who is being shut out by this. How much will this drive up costs, taxes, and income requirements for ordinary citizens whose reliable income won't even be enough to simply qualify for a cheap rent.

Ward shares, "We have been performing this show for a few years now and every time we put it up we update the content according to what is happening in Downtown related to housing and homelessness. This particular run we have new cast members who are currently staying in downtown shelters and performing for their first time alongside zAmya veterans who are an extremely thoughtful and talented group. The cast is incredible. You wouldn't actually know the kind of challenges folks overcome in order to make it to rehearsals. This show entertains as well as provokes deep thinking about our city and our relationships with each other. People who haven't seen us before are often surprised that they laughed as much as they did."

She points out, "When we started working on this show, the Metrodome was still standing. We interviewed tailgating Vikings fans about how homelessness impacts their experience of Downtown Minneapolis. These interviews inspired a scene, the setting of which has adapted alongside the progress of the stadium. Responses were varied but most folks we interviewed



*Home Street Home.* Photo by Sean Smuda



*Queen.* Photo by Stephanie Lynn Rogers

either offered a story of someone they personally know who is homeless or said that it didn't impact them much. They didn't see it. What we discovered that afternoon was that the most likely place you will find someone experiencing homelessness at the game is the person running the bag check or serving the refreshments. Now the first home game at the new stadium will happen during this run and the conversation has only gotten more relevant."

## QUEEN

Sept. 23–Oct. 2

In the Heart of the Beast Puppet and Mask Theatre, 1500 E Lake St., Minneapolis

612-721-2535

[www.hotbt.org](http://www.hotbt.org)

The region's premier puppet and mask theater is committed to issues of race. Erik Ehn and Junauda Petrus have co-written a meditation on the death of young African Americans at the hands of enforced government power. Last year Ehn was writing about a grandmother's grief related to this. Petrus published a fantasy poem calling for police departments to be given to grandmothers. Director Alison Heimsted brought them together to write for this collaboration with puppets designed by Gustavo Boada.

Petrus asks, "What are all the layers of a grandmother? The woman who nurtured your nurturer? In working on this piece I have been summoned by all of the wild women in my blood, ancestors who whisper about themselves in my habits and ways." ■



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# Gay Ex-Player Billy Bean Wants To Focus on Baseball, But Baseball Wants To Focus On Diversity

"Life is so constructed, that the event does not, cannot, will not, match the expectation."  
—Charlotte Brontë

Billy Bean's life seems to have been constructed around mismatching expectation. During his early adulthood, he was a Major League Baseball player. His family, his friends, and his colleagues all projected their expectations onto him, and, at first, he matched up with those expectations expertly, bouncing like an inside grounder from Detroit to Los Angeles to Japan to San Diego while plying his macho trade. In those days (the late '80s and early '90s) Major League Baseball's culture revolved around winning games, and the only expectation was good, old-fashioned, meat-and-potatoes, American masculinity.

But Billy Bean confuted those expectations when he revealed the secret of his sexual identity and the secret pain that carrying that secret engendered. "I was really not comfortable with my reality," he recalls of his playing days. "The thought of talking about it was not an option. I lost my partner the night before what was my last year, and that, along with the secret, and me worried about my health — I got some shaky medical advice that was basically, 'You've been exposed, so you're probably going to test positive,' even

though I didn't test positive and never have. It was conveyed to me differently, so I had some worried days. To go to the park and try to harbor those three secrets as a marginal player in the big league was not fun."

In an era when the merest thought isn't real until it's been cast into cyberspace via social media, it's hard to appreciate the necessary gravity of such ninja-like slinkiness. "It was a different era," Bean remembers. "I regret that I didn't have the confidence even to talk to my family, or a friend, or my roommate, or whatever. I've come to see that that was a mistake, but at the time, it didn't seem like an option."

Discussing Bean's sexual identity didn't seem like an option because of everyone's expectations. A gay man competing in Major League Baseball? The expectations summoned by those two concepts (in 1999, when Billy Bean came out, four years after retiring) mismatched like pinstripes and feather boas.

These days, Billy Bean serves as Major League Baseball's Vice President of Social Responsibility and Inclusion. Which begs the question: what in the sacred name of Ty Cobb does *that* mean? "Social responsibility encompasses a message of acceptance and inclusion which is our workplace

code of conduct," Bean notes in a tone that's somehow both easy and guarded. "Major League Baseball had an existing zero tolerance policy of harassment or discrimination that was based on your race, your color, your religion, your gender, or your national origin. When I was brought on, they included sexual orientation in 2013. They were looking for someone to represent that message."

Major League Baseball looking for GLBT people to be represented? Expectation is mismatched again. Or maybe not. Observes Bean, "I saw all these wonderful things going on in baseball, programs and initiatives, and people were not really sharing that, so a lot of fans didn't know what was going on."

If you expect a retired gay player now working in the front office to be dedicating his efforts to allowing a player to come out while active, then Billy Bean is mismatching your expectation too. "It can't be graded, in my opinion, on how many players come out," Bean says of his behind-the-scenes work. "That's not the litmus test or report card I'm looking for, because that's a whole other million considerations that are different from the job of each club. [My responsibility] is to make an equitable working environment, a place where the players understand the



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**Billy Bean.** Photo by Sophia Hantzes

philosophy of the organization and where the fans feel safe to watch the game. If I can help create a culture that is different than the one I played in, then I feel like we are doing our job."

This culture creation is not for the betterment of gay players, per se, but for the betterment of baseball itself. "The process is big, and my head is always full of ideas on how to take away the pressure that's been associated with a gay male in a major league clubhouse," Bean elaborates. "That gets to the core of the problem; it gets to where the media can go after questions like that. I don't want it to be a distraction. I would be moved and thrilled if a player comes out and no one makes a big deal out of it. That would be heaven on Earth to me."

But the notion of no one making a big deal of an active player coming out is a remote one, and an effect that most GLBT baseball fans pinning for an openly gay player don't consider is what happens next. "Baseball's a hard game, and you need your manager to have confidence in you that you're not a distraction and that your teammates respect

you," insists Bean. "If a player is receiving a lot of attention for doing something on the field, I think the other players are all for it. But if you are getting attention because you married a celebrity or your wife's a rock star or you're gay, I think after a few days they'd really like to move on and make it about baseball. That's just about being part of the team."

Bean brings that sense of teamwork to his message by not forcing it onto any given club. "I've only gone by invitation," the Vice President asserts. "It's not a mandate from the commissioner. That was essential to me. Being an old school baseball kind of guy myself, I was nervous about how my message would be received. The right time and place is very, very important, so I made it known that I could come in any capacity."

And one of the many ball clubs that approached Vice President Billy Bean was the one representing the Land of Nice, our own Minnesota Twins. In fact, August 23 was Diversity Day, when expectation was thrown to the four winds with celebrations of multiculturalism that included a pre-

game, on-the-field parade, the singing of the national anthem by the Twin Cities Gay Men's Chorus, a post-game networking event, and (oh, yeah) an actual game which only began after Bean himself threw out the ceremonial first pitch.

"I couldn't feel prouder about today," Bean affirms. "I feel like this is a wonderful example of a relationship that I have intact with the Twins, one that I worked very hard to cultivate. They are showing me that they're reaching out to their community."

As impressive as those outreach efforts are, they're not the only such efforts proffered by the local major league franchise. "This is a week-long event," Billy declared. "This effort represents a lot of resources, a lot of time and energy, and I'm very proud of the Twins."

Since diversity is a means to the end of being nice, of course Minnesota's major league team had to turn one day of diversity into seven days of celebration. What else would you expect? ■



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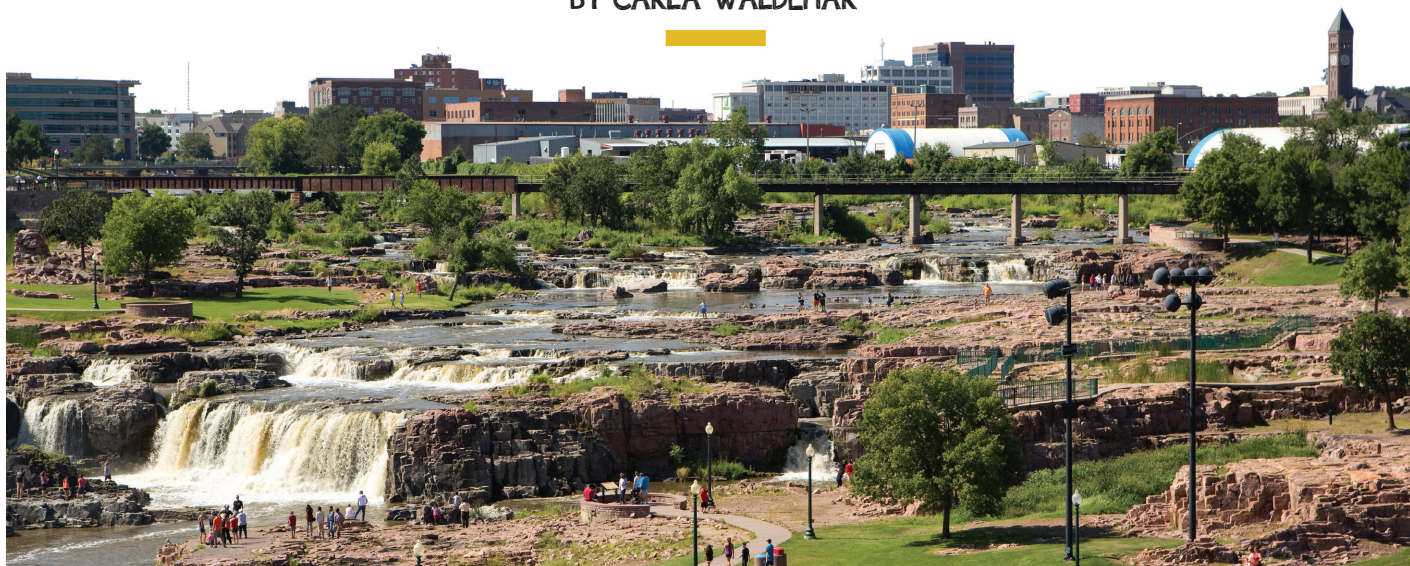
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# SOUTH DAKOTA

## THERE'S ART IN THEM THAR PLAINS

BY CARLA WALDEMAR



Falls Park, Sioux Falls. Photo by Bigstock/Steven Frame

You know there's art in South Dakota, of course you do; the monumental sculptures of Mount Rushmore and Crazy Horse are high on many a traveler's bucket list, and rightly so. But the artworks along I-29, the north-south "cultural corridor" that's just a palette's throw from the Minnesota border, takes far fewer vacay days and time behind the windshield. Here's the payoff.

Aim for Sioux Falls, the state's largest city, anchored by its namesake Falls Park, where three rambunctious waterfalls tumble over the sparkling pink quartzite stone that serves as the city's signature building block. Kids and ducks paddle in the waterways below the observation tower and picnic-ready Falls Overlook Cafe, a stop for the town's summertime trolleys.

Then scope out Washington Pavilion of Arts and Science, a repurposed high school, offering a three-fer arts immersion: a hands-on science center currently celebrating outer space (complete with space toilet); art galleries, where I was electrified by an exhibition of contemporary Native American talent; and the South Dakota Rock and Roll Music Association and performance hall where Joan Rivers and the South Dakota Symphony Orchestra are among the featured acts.

Trot next to the gleaming quartzite courthouse of the 1800s. Today it hosts a history museum whose galleries gallivant from exhibits reliving Fort Dakota of 1869 to the paintings of George Catlin, the painters' painter of Lakota life. The Purse-onality exhibit showcases, decade by decade, "the one accessory that can make or break your outfit," evolving from ladies' reticules holding dainty pistols to one's "alter ego accessory" with lust-worthy examples by bold-name designers Prada, Gucci, and Chanel. Don't miss the museum's mascot, a stuffed buffalo utilized nose-to-tail (and scrotum) by the Lakotas — "the Wal-Mart of the Plains Indians."

Downtown's main drag, Phillips Avenue, boasts the must-see

SculptureWalk anchoring the pavement where retail discoveries include Man Code (hip, high-end menswear); Unglued (sassy gifts like an "I Make Killer Hot Dish" apron and superhero tie clip); Urban Archaeology for vintage finds (working cameras, vinyl); and Zandbroz Variety, perhaps the nation's most eclectic general store: T-shirts to taxidermy, and a books section with shelves entitled "Music: The Old Stuff Is Still Best" and "Philosophy: Ditto." (P.S. Lovers of cow lawn art, you're gonna envy my purchase.)

Eat at Phillips Avenue Diner, presenting classics like hot turkey sandwiches and an only-in-South-Dakota mashed potato-pot roast wrap, plus malts that should make the Michelin Guide. Or Bros Brasserie Americano, where choices range from shrimp and grits to duck with pickled blueberry and watermelon radish, green anise star foam, asparagus, and molten duck liver pâté.

Finish the night at Club David, the ultimate gay bar, with rooftop patio, drag show, DJ, dance floor, and pool table. Or drive to Fernson Brewing Company to tour and taste (think barrel-aged farmhouse ale). Fliers should check out the Euro-style AeroStay Hotel (rooms = tiny and design-y) which is ultra-convenient, with private entrance to the airport terminal.

But don't leave yet! Scoot north on I-29 about 100 miles to Watertown, where the magnet is the Redlin Art Center, a massive *Gone With the Wind*-meets-college-dorm structure luring 150,000 visitors a year (free admission) to view close to 200 works by the homeboy "master of memories" painter: ducks at sunset and forest cabins among the nostalgia. Terry Redlin, at 16, enrolled in art school in St. Paul and later illustrated playing cards for Brown & Bigelow, the art division of Webb Publishing. Several scenes of Lake Minnetonka grace the center's walls.

Watertown's vintage main street boasts its own sculpture walk (say hi to Humpty Dumpty) and the gallery of floral watercolorist Sandy Ellyson. Grab a bite and beer flight at Watertown Brewing Company, a





(Clockwise from left) Shopping at Man Code, Sioux Falls. Humpty Dumpty sculpture, Watertown. Early Italian-made violin at the National Music Museum, Vermillion. Photos by Carla Waldemar

contemporary setting for XXL wooden planks piled high with cheeses, salumi, cured fish, pickles, and more before (if you're still standing) summoning pulled chicken sliders or a bacon-maple-blessed chicken and waffle sandwich.

Head back south for 50 miles to Brookings, home of South Dakota State University, which helps make this a small town with big art. The art museum currently showcases Lakota Emergence (through Oct. 17), melding dynamic contemporary works with historic treasures. Peek also at the Marghab linen collection of complex embroidery created in a Portuguese Madeira enterprise owned by a Watertown woman.

Nearby, the children's museum is — trust this jaded traveler — the best of its kind, freeing kids (of all ages) from instructions. “Just try it out!” urges marketing director Randy Grimsley as we explore an auto mechanic's station, a splash room, milk a “cow,” collect “chicken” eggs and harvest “vegetables.” Outside, quake your heart out as a lifesize T. rex roars and rumbles.

Lower that heartbeat at McCrory Gardens, a botanical gardens and arboretum, brightening 70 acres with vibrant native blooms. For a peek at the practical side of planting, stop at the South Dakota State Agricultural Heritage Museum to delve into the ‘whys’ behind the facts of farm life and sheep herding.

Brookings' compact downtown is home to four (and counting) arresting murals, covering brick walls with scenes of South Dakota history. But the sun is setting, so it's time to wet your whistle, and the place calling your name is Wooden Legs Brewing Company, where you're wise to summon a flight and side of pizza. The daring (or crazed college kid) will then meander to Jim's Tap, where, amid dusty medieval swords and timbers, the drink to order is the Backpacker (lime vodka, 7-Up, and OJ). Best hangover cure: breakfast at Cook's Kitchen, frying up diner fare since 1947.

Now steer the car further south for 120 miles to Vermillion, home of University of South Dakota, whose pretty campus invites a stroll and peek

into Historic Old Main's gallery, devoted to Native artist Oscar Howe. But the big draw — a destination drive — is the campus's National Music Museum, a priceless collection of the greatest musical instruments in history. As the highway ads promise, “Sax Appeal.”

That saxophone is the very one invented by Adolphe Sax in the 1850s. Peer also at his impossible-to-play seven-valve trombone. Ogle the world's oldest cello (the Amati-made instrument of 1544) and earliest harpsichord (1530); the extinct, banjo-like cittern of 1550; exotic 17th-century ebony and ivory guitars; and a harp-guitar (the jackalope of instruments). There's a 16th-century cornetto stolen from the Rothschilds by the Nazis; the snare drum of King George I; a room-size Indonesian gamelan; the harmonica and accordion rooms.

Trace the history of the pre-piano keyboards, the show-off household instrument, likened to the status of cars of today. But the most awe-inspiring is “the finest collection of Renaissance stringed instruments in the world” with violins by Amati of Naples, owned by royalty, and those of his pupil, Stradivari. Modern treasures too: guitars of B.B. King, Elvis, Johnny Cash, Bob Dylan, Muddy Waters. And Bill Clinton's sax.

After feasting your eyes, how about something tasty for your palate? Café Brulé delivers extraordinary coffee drinks plus lunch-ables like shrimp tacos and SLT sandwiches (think salmon) and a side of — remember these words — potatoes brûlé, rich and creamy. Return to breakfast for their famous waffles or Benedicts.

Fans of red meat, head directly to The Red Steakhouse, a Fort Knox of steaks and prime rib housed in a former bank. Under the gaze of a buffalo head and painting of Clint Eastwood, we started with duck tacos and beet and orange salad, and succumbed to sides of creamed spinach, mac and cheese, and such. Doggie bags are mandatory. So is a visit to nearby Valiant Vineyards Winery for a taste of best-seller Wild Grape, Turkey Ridge Creek, and vodka made from (huh?) grapes. ■

For more information, visit [www.travelsouthdakota.com](http://www.travelsouthdakota.com).



# COLUMBUS

## THE HOODS OF COLUMBUS

BY CARLA WALDEMAR



North Market. Photo by Bigstock/pdb1

Ohio's capital city is a metropolis of two million, but, like the milk of its venerated Snowville Creamery, it's not bland and flavorless; it's separated into unique components — rich, tasty, diverse and distinct. Let's amble through three of my favorites.

### SHORT NORTH

The name was once a police code for "Uh-oh: Trouble up there again." Today it sparkles as the epicenter of cool, with trendy restaurants and boutiques of high design crowding this stretch of High Street. (Hop on and off the free CBUS circulator to ease your feet.)

Got art? You bet, starting with 19 curated murals brightening brick walls and 20 indie galleries, like Hammond Harkins, starring edgy contemporary works, and the Lindsay, champion of outsider art. The Pizuti Collection is a mini-museum of ultra-contempo, often controversial, works; you'll spot it by the larger-than-life metal sculpture of a dude pissing in the courtyard.

Boutiques of handmade jewelry and streetwear are all too frequent for the welfare of your wallet, but bargains also call your name at second-hand meccas such as gay-owned Out of the Closet and Flower Child, whose mid-mod dec and garments have gone home with the likes of Bette Midlar and Scarlett Johansson. Same for Mukha Custom Cosmetics, whose owner, Tim Maher, is queen of the insightful insult ("No more blue eye shadow for you, darlin'," he instructed yours truly. "Just because you've done something for 20 years doesn't make it right.") Also on the receiving end: clients like Patti LaBelle, Hillary Clinton, and the Dixie Chicks.

When you feel peckish, patrol the 35 merchants in the 140-year-old North Market: pizza to pierogi, capped by Jeni's Ice Cream, acknowledged as the best in Ohio, if not the universe. The district's most reward-

ing restaurants begin with The Guild (ricotta gnocchi with fava beans, carrots and wild mushrooms; cavatelli in rabbit confit, garbanzos, sweet peas and asparagus; salmon with romanesco, raisins and cauliflower-caviar cream; and ribeye with white asparagus puree, wild mushrooms and duck pâté).

Wander over to the Hilton, where Chef Bill Glover wowed prissy New Yorkers at a James Beard dinner celebrating all things Ohio (as he did for us), like pork loin with purple asparagus, cauliflower-parsnip puree and Chioggia beets in miso pork juice, or strip loin paired with short rib bread pudding. Also featured were Thumbelina carrots, kale, turnips and garlic roots. A short hop away, Salt & Pine, the new kid on the block, fashions inventive plates like a soft egg with porcini cream; buttered crab partnered with a cured egg yolk, "almost burnt" cream, red mustard greens and Meyer lemon; and country-fried quail with kefir cornbread, chestnut gravy, currant jam and braised greens.

### FRANKLINTON

If a 'hood is called The Bottoms, you've nowhere to go but up. This once-sketchy stretch of town is on the cusp of gentrification, led by a 140-member artists' co-op housed in a rehabbed warehouse called 400 West Rich Street. It's also home to Movement Activities, an innocent-sounding moniker for trapeze work (come to watch or learn) started by former NYC dancer Mike Thomas, who also offer classes in yoga and fitness for scaredy-cats like me.

Lots of artists' studios to peruse there, also, plus an idea-generator called Steam Factory and the brilliant Idea Factory, part of the trendy Maker Movement that offers classes and then tool-renting-cum-workspace in crafts like blacksmithing, jewelry making, electronics (3D printing), welding (where we fashioned our very own horseshoe coat hooks), and woodworking, aka anger therapy. To turn raw lumber into that fashionable faux-distressed look, we flung hammers and other tor-



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Brick house in German Village. Photo by Carla Waldemar

ture instruments, then manhandled a blowtorch. (Or, as our instructor daintily put it, “Kick the shit out of it, then burn the crap out of it.”) Date Night drop-in sessions monthly, too.

Then head next door to Land Grant Brewery for a well-deserved reward. And grab a bite at Strongwater, with fun food like fried green tomatoes with fried egg; pork belly tacos; Nashville hot chicken; or pesto mac and cheese.

## GERMAN VILLAGE

In 1814 immigrants began flooding the brand-new capital city of the brand-new state of Ohio. By 1865, one-third of the city’s population was German — sturdy folks who built neat brick homes topped with roofs of slate and girdled with black wrought-iron fences. The area boasted four breweries, German schools and churches, newspapers and social clubs — until 1914, when Germany was now The Enemy — books burned, streets re-named. The neighborhood sunk into decay until, in the ’60s, foresighted folks began buying up the cheap properties and rehabbing them with TLC. Today, forget it: prices are sky-high. But you can ogle. Pick up a map at the Visitors Center on Third Street for a self-guided walking tour.

I did spot a lonely Starbucks, but it’s the only chain in the entire 233-acre Village. Instead, stop in at Caterina for European housewares; Pistachio Vera for french macarons (apricot-ginger, anyone?) and elegant pastries; Kittie’s Handcrafted Cakes (white lavender and/or PBJ cupcakes). Explore the eight-room treasure trove of elite American crafts at Helen Winnemore’s (don’t miss the stacks of drawers harboring fine jewelry), and The Book Loft, with winding staircases connecting 32 rambling rooms (pick up a map or you’ll never be seen again); open until 11 p.m. daily. Stroll the perimeter of Schiller Park, named for the poet whose statue it centers, all fragrant with mock orange and iris.

Then, where to dine? Easy. Katzinger’s Deli, since 1984 serving Old World Jewish specialties like knishes, latkes, blintzes, chopped liver, and humongous corned beef sandwiches, along with crisp pickles from serve-yourself barrels. Or brats at Schmidt’s Sausage Haus. Prefer tapas or paella? Then Barcelona’s your spot. Its chilly gazpacho hit the spot, as did fried soft shell crab with avocado salad, and stacks of crispy pork belly skewered with shrimp and grilled cipollini onions aside fennel salad. Or the plate of mussels, shrimp and clams accented with bacon and sundried tomatoes. At G. Michael’s, housed in a former stable, the grilled asparagus starter is sublime. So’s the duck liver pâté. And the wild mushroom gratin. And the shrimp and grits with country ham and sausage. ■

Visit [www.experiencecolumbus.com](http://www.experiencecolumbus.com), where the site also offers LGBT info and newsletter. Pick up the free pub Outlook for venues and events, too.



(Top to bottom) Gary Jones, maker of bespoke suits. Photo by Carla Waldemar  
Franklinton mural. Photo by Bigstock/pdb1

## COLUMBUS IS ALL ABOUT CLOTHES

The city is the third-largest mecca for fashion design in the U.S.A. (following New York and Los Angeles), home to such major brands as The Limited, Victoria’s Secret, Abercrombie & Fitch, Bath & Body Works, Human, Express, DSW, and more. Its College of Art & Design spawns a slice of this top talent. Others move here from both coasts, as did Celeste Malvar-Stewart. “In Columbus, people are open to new ideas, so you can move forward,” she says. “Haute couture here is at the boiling stage, so I can’t wait to see what will happen.” While waiting, she creates high-end women’s wear, often using wool from nearby sheep (with whom she’s on a first-name basis) and dyes from onion skins, black walnuts, and iron, for a rusty aura. Make your own silk-and-lambs’-wool scarf in a workshop session.

Gary Jones declares, “I always wore suits to church and school, so they called me Mr. Jones, I got people’s respect and attention.” It led him to apprentice with a tailor to learn how to design and craft his garment of choice. Jones opened his own bespoke shop, Jones Select, eight years ago and now sells his suits (\$1,000 – \$5,000) to NFL athletes and more. “I’ve always been in the forefront, defining the look: a clean appeal, neat patterns, clear but strong. ‘Stand out or fit in,’ I was told, and I prefer to stand out.”



A romantic photograph of two men in formal attire. The man on the left, with light brown hair, is wearing a dark blue suit and a white shirt. He has a ring on his left ring finger and is holding the hand of the other man. The man on the right, with dark curly hair, is also in a dark blue suit and white shirt, with a patterned bow tie. He is looking down at the hand being held. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey with a purple-to-pink gradient overlay.

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# A GETAWAY ON THE BREEZE



Breezy Point Cabins on Lake Superior: a cabin — and bed — with a view.



BY ANDY LIEN  
PHOTOS BY ANDY LIEN

Just last week, I escaped to the North Shore for a mid-week getaway. It was a spur-of-the-moment thing, a magical gap in my calendar, and a new-but-old accommodation destination that had a rare vacancy. I found a friend who could make the trip with me, sent the dog to camp, and pointed the Fiat north to Breezy Point Cabins on Lake Superior, which are found on “Scenic 61” which is the original, lakeside version of highway 61 between Duluth and Two Harbors. Not to be confused with Breezy Point Resort on Pelican Lake in north central Minnesota, these cabins were built in the 1930s on a stunning rock perch on Lake Superior. Worlds away, but yet so close.

It surprises me how close Duluth and Lake Superior are to the Twin Cities. On a clear day with a good podcast to listen to, it seems like I just left St. Paul when suddenly I’m cresting the hill from which we can first see our beautiful Great Lake. That’s a golden moment of each trip. And it’s a trip that a number of people from the Twin Cities make at least on a yearly basis, to attend Duluth-Superior Pride each Labor Day Weekend, which celebrated its 30th anniversary this year. A number of people who

belong to this community as members or allies live in Duluth all the way up through Cook County and into Grand Marais (also called “Gay Marais”) and they make this beautiful part of our state even more welcoming.

When I travel, I tend to go until I can’t. That means I get some coffee in me, I map out the day, I go, I see, I eat, and I finally stop. It’s a getaway, but a recreational one. Having a place of respite for the rest is crucial in order to achieve some kind of balance. And our three days/two nights of getting away was going to be chock full of get up, go, and stop. After I got the green light from my friend that he could take the time and accompany me, I had an itinerary set to go in a matter of minutes. I think I’m always in a state of being ready. Just give me a reason, some time, the means, and a direction and we’ll be off and running. Three days, two nights...it’s go time.

And off we went. Our first destination was the only reservation I made for the entire trip: **New Scenic Cafe**. It’s like visiting an old friend. Knotty pine walls are warm and bright, the colors are plentiful, and the food and drink are top-notch. Chef Scott Graden’s place, complete with a blue yurt on the property, is a North Shore jewel. The choice to eat there is never one I’ll regret, but having to narrow down my choices of appetizers and entrées is always something that takes some consideration.



We started with an asparagus galette, which was a large square of puff pastry that framed what looked to be a landscape painting of stalks of asparagus over gruyere with a mound of prosciutto and a sun in the sky of a split soft-boiled egg. Absolutely divine in its salty-nuttiness. I thoroughly enjoyed my sandwich, a cochinita pibil, of pork shoulder, spices, avocado, and queso fresco with buttermilk creme fraiche, but the table's entrée of the evening was the special, the Niçoise, of seared tuna, olives, tomatoes, green beans, and a light sauce, all of which was "Perfect, perfect, perfect." What I didn't expect was that dessert could possibly beat the thrice-announced perfection of the entrée. But it did. When I heard that there was huckleberry mousse on the dessert menu, I had to order it. And after I tasted it, I became angry, it was so good. No, that's not the accurate emotion for the situation, but perhaps I was upset that I'd never had it before. Or might not have it again. Regardless, there was no getting around just how pleased we were by New Scenic Cafe. Again. As usual. And, alas, it was over.

The part I didn't mention is that I made the dinner reservation for 5:30. There's no getting around it, that's an early dinner time. But I had good reason behind this planning. The days are getting shorter and the sunsets are getting earlier, and there's no way I wanted to miss the sun setting on Lake Superior from our place on its shore. So, fed and happy, it was time to "get thee to Gitche Gumee."

Upon checking in, I was sent off to the cabin with an armload of split logs, a kit of graham crackers, chocolate, and marshmallows for making s'mores, and plenty of kindling for building our own fire. The light was getting lower, the breeze was languid, the directions were given, and we took our place in the cabin next to the "one with the gal with the Subaru." (I'm sure if I'd ever met her, I would have liked her.) We parked, moved into the cabin, and immediately built a fire at which I made sure to take a bunch of photos, videos, and selfies, because the setting was stunning and it needed to be shared with the world on Instagram.

Recently reopened in June by Odyssey Resorts, **Breezy Point Cabins on Lake Superior** have been revamped to keep the rustic charm where possible, with twists of modernity. Our cabin was the 12th of 12, on the northernmost end of the property. A "studio" cabin, it has a modern kitchenette, a king-sized bed, two lounge chairs, a fireplace, a two-person granite-topped bar table with stools as a dining area, a bathroom with a sizeable shower with subway tile walls, and not only its own deck but also its own firepit and seating area on the lawn above the lake. The decor is Pottery Barn-meets-Fair Isle and trapper blanket stripes. When lying on the bed, the windows and the cabin's proximity to the lake make it seem like we're on it, rather than next to it. And the sounds of the waves lapping the shore only assist and reinforce that daydream.

It was the perfect place to call home base for a few days along the lake. But, more than just a place to land, it was a location at which we could spend time. Time, being something that needs to be grabbed and hoarded and consumed wisely, is not squandered here. Any moment spent yields great returns in peaceful moments basking in the sun, feeling the breeze, smelling the water and pine needles and campfire smoke. Our nighttime was for chatting by the fire as we watched the lake disappear into darkness. The mornings were for reading and drinking coffee, taking time to be present in this place.

But the days? The days were for going. And both of them started at **Mocha Moose** with a large miel, the honey-sweetened cinnamon-y latte that was obtained just across the highway from the cabins. The first day took us north to Two Harbors, where we drove through the historic district and saw the first lighthouse of the trip, followed by a quick hike at **Gooseberry Falls State Park** to the middle falls, accessible for free with a state park sticker on your vehicle and open at 8:30 in the morning. When given a limited amount of time, it's prudent to skim the cream off the top and that meant a quick stop at the highlights, the next of which was **Split Rock Lighthouse**.



(Top to bottom) Gooseberry Falls. Split Rock Lighthouse. Duluth Park Point.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32 ➔



## FALL GETAWAYS



(Clockwise from left) Naniboujou Lodge Dining Room. Naniboujou Chicken Salad. Kara's Grilled Turkey and Swiss with Babe's Bean Salad.



Though our actual destination for the day was Judge C.R. Magney State Park, about 20 minutes north of Grand Marais (and, therefore, 2 hours and 20 minutes north of our cabin), none of the state parks or scenic stops are terribly far off the beaten path of Highway 61, so they're all doable on an abbreviated schedule. The one that may give you pause if you're a person who'd like to get more bang from your buck could be Split Rock Lighthouse since, though it doesn't require a State Park vehicle sticker, a vehicle sticker does not get you out of a \$10 entry fee. We gladly paid our way to be some of the first people through the iconic and pristinely preserved landmark at 10:00, while taking a quick hike along the edge of the cliff for some photo opportunities. Climbing up into the lighthouse and seeing both the view of the lake as well as the lens and mechanism up close was something I don't recall doing in my earlier years and is, literally, worth the price of admission.

Hopping in the car and heading further north, we ended up passing on some rather irresistible stops, like Tettegouche River State Park, Temperance River State Park, Palisade Head, and Cascade River State Park, but our destination egged us onward and upward. Before our afternoon of hiking, we required lunch, and I chose the perfect spot for it. Pretty much across the street from Judge C.R. Magney State Park, where we'd spend the first half of the afternoon, is **Naniboujou Lodge**, which had been on my list of places to go for some time. And, since going there last week, it was published in the *Star Tribune* that the lodge is up for sale. So, while I joked with friends about checking out real estate north of Grand Marais (I was referring to Croftville along the lake), I do not have a spare \$3.295 million lying around for this healthy dose of artful history. I did have \$11 for lunch, though. And it was delicious, though the dining room is the showstopper for this destination.

Naniboujou is the Cree god of outdoors. Opened in 1929 as an exclusive lodge, Naniboujou Lodge has been a retreat place for respite and recreation for many travelers and diners. The centerpiece of the prop-

erty is the dining room, a tall and colorful space that has a 20-foot high domed ceiling, reminiscent of a canoe, and colorful Cree designs painted on the surfaces of the 20-by-80-foot room, which is crowned by a 200-ton stone fireplace, the largest in the state of Minnesota. The lodge is on the National Register of Historic Places and is open to the public from the third week in May through the third week in October, but is also open for special events during the winter months when renovation and preservation take priority. After taking a number of photos, we finally sat down to take a look at the menu and were delighted to have what seemed to be a bit of a throwback of a meal for lunch, suitable for such a place steeped in the olden days. We enjoyed a chicken salad, some carrot soup, a superb sandwich called Kara's Grilled Turkey and Swiss that also featured pear and honey mustard with orange raisin bread and a side of Babe's Bean Salad that had a stunning and subtle cumin vinaigrette. It was an absolutely delectable sandwich and a nice hearty foundation for the hardy hike ahead of us.

Speaking of hikes, our afternoon plan to hike in to Devil's Kettle along the Brule River in **Judge C.R. Magney State Park** was not a lofty one. My pro tip is to make sure you've got water as well as have visited the restroom before heading to the park because there are no such facilities there. What's somewhere between a 2- and 2.25-mile hike to the falls and back is a bit deceptive. Sure, it's less of a jaunt than walking around Lake Calhoun in Minneapolis, but it's all hills with very little level ground and 175 stairs to climb both up and down. Years ago, I'd gone to the park to do the same hike with friends and had just plain given up on it. So, it was my dragon to slay. Or my white whale. Or just a really challenging hike that I wasn't going to let get the better of me this time. And I'm so glad I didn't. As it so happens, there are plenty of people who take the jaunt up and down the stairs and the hills with questionable footing quite easily. There are also plenty of people who aren't accustomed to being active in such a way, but are doing it anyway, and the sense of camara-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 34 ➔



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## FALL GETAWAYS



(Top to bottom) Maple BBQ Chicken Salad with Wild Rice, Angry Trout Cafe. Savory Crepe, At Sara's Table Chester Creek Cafe. Nicoise, New Scenic Cafe. Huckleberry Mousse, New Scenic Cafe.

derie and goodwill is pretty palpable. In the stretch that is one long and steep stairway, there are a few places to step aside and sit on benches built into the wooden stair system, thank goodness, which means pacing is key. And the payoff is not only seeing some sights that few people get to behold, but also witnessing the mystery of a waterfall whose cauldron drains somewhere only the devil knows. Kind of like a toilet flushing to nowhere. Fascinating nature. See it for yourself.

After swapping out some sweaty clothes for clean ones, we went south again and grabbed the largest cold press coffee at **Java Moose** before romping around Grand Marais for the rest of the afternoon. Unfortunately, we got there just after World's Best Donuts had closed (it opens at 6:30 in the morning and closes when it sells out), so heed my usual life advice and always eat the donuts first; we should have nabbed some on our way through town the first time. But, as it so happened, our timing served us well for not only being able to take a leisurely stroll and scramble out on the rocks of **Artists' Point**, but also get an early table at the **Angry Trout Cafe**, something which is in such demand during the summer season that I considered this feat and victory to be akin to defeating Devil's Kettle. It was a banner afternoon, to say the least. Artists' Point looks to be an island just past the Coast Guard station at the harbor, but it's actually a tombolo, which is an island connected to shore via a gravel bar. Also past the Coast Guard station is a rocky route out to the Grand Marais Lighthouse, which always gives us incomparable views of both Lake Superior and the little town that is so lovely.

Seated on the deck looking out on the harbor at Angry Trout Cafe, the skies were blue and the breeze was light. The sun was shining, but not beating down upon us. The day of hikes and scrambles was catching up as I sank into my chair and just looked out at Lake Superior. We'd done enough talking so that silence was just as suiting, he with a glass of sauvignon blanc, me with a glass of maple cream (a cream soda made with maple syrup). Known for its dishes made with fish that's pulled straight from the lake that day, the Angry Trout's menu was brimming with options that are healthy not only for our bodies, but also for our consciences. They were also a feast for the eyes with my maple barbecue grilled chicken breast entrée that came with a side of wild rice pilaf and a colorful salad that included fresh wild blueberries, carrot and beet shreds, cheese, onions, sweet corn, and an edible flower. Luscious and gorgeous. We lingered and shared a piece of avocado cheesecake before taking the sunset trip down the shore back to Breezy Point Cabins to enjoy the rest of the evening by the fire and the lake.

We hit the hay that night, me more tired than usual, with the windows open. I thought I'd sleep like death after a day of fresh air, sunshine, activity, and food, but Lake Superior pulled one of its tricks on us and the gentle lull of waves lapping the shore turned into a dull roar as the wind picked up during the night causing water to crash against the shores, relentlessly. Wide awake, I smiled at the lake and its mischief, but refused to close the windows to the roar. After all, I sleep to the sounds of the light rail transit system at home. If I could bring the lake with me as my soundtrack instead, I would. It was just one more reason to treasure the experience of that cabin on that lake at that spot at that time. Perfect.

In the morning we checked out of our cabin after spending some time reading and basking in the early sun, the waves loudly heralding our departure. The plan was to spend half the day in Duluth before driving back to the Twin Cities. If I were to do one thing differently on this trip, it'd be to schedule a third night to have a full day in Duluth to be able to get a bit more than just a taste of that fine town. But, as it was, the taste was still sweet, no matter how short.

I've heard for some time that the place to go for excellent food, that's not found where the rest of the tourists are, is **At Sara's Table Chester Creek Cafe** in the Chester Park Neighborhood. We were hankering for a good and wholesome brunch, and we were not disappointed. In a prime

CONTINUED ON PAGE 36 ➔





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## FALL GETAWAYS

corner location with plenty of parking and both indoor and outdoor dining spaces, owners Barbara Neubert and her wife Carla Blumberg have been making people happy with their brand of “creative cuisine with a conscience” since 2002 (be sure to read up on the “conscience” aspect of their business on their website in the blog entries full of insightful thoughts about food and the times we live in). The menu is brimming with choices for people who identify as vegan, vegetarian, gluten-free, or omnivorous (like me) with a preference for local and ethically sourced food. I had a difficult time deciding between the sweet and savory crepes, but eventually went with the savory, filled with Canadian bacon, raclette cheese, caramelized apples, and tarragon, while my friend was quite happy with the “Hippy Farm Breakfast” of baked eggs, sautéed vegetables, garlic, monterey jack and cheddar cheeses, sliced almonds, potatoes, and toast with raspberry jam. We were fed and fortified, ready to hit the waterfront.

I take Duluth’s waterfront for granted. It was the first vacation my family ever took, my parents had to make sure my brother and I wouldn’t kill each other if they took us in a car for a trip any longer than an hour. As it just so happens, we still haven’t killed each other over 30 years later and Duluth still holds a place in my heart and memories. In the short half day that was full of sunshine and blue skies, we ventured out across the lift bridge to **Park Point Beach** and wandered in the sand a bit. Then, we parked the car in **Canal Park** and went shopping for both art and activewear at Siivis, a smaller gallery by the same people of Sivertson Gallery in Grand Marais, and the Duluth Pack retail store, a place that is so very Minnesota. Canal Park and its walkability makes for easy decisions and destinations. We just follow our feet and suddenly we’re at one of the lighthouses or in the Dewitt-Seitz building ordering sandwiches to go from **Northern Waters Smokehaus**. And, just before we left town, we made sure to hit Vikre Distillery when it opened at 2:00 p.m.

I’m not sure if we appeared a bit sad or just plain dedicated to be waiting on the sidewalk for a distillery to open; I’m not sure if I care, either. We were glad to walk into the historic building holding **Vikre Distillery** which has been refurbished for making and tasting spirits that are crafted from our northern surroundings. Cedar, juniper, and other botanicals from the watershed give the spirits their flavors. As said so poetically, Vikre is all about “a town still hiding rumrunners tunnels from prohibition. A lake so compelling that people tattoo its outline on their bodies. A Norwegian girl who dreams in flavors. And an American boy who can distill dreams into reality.” We belled up to the bar, got friendly with the bartender, Ellen, and learned and tasted all we could about the various offerings of the distillery, from a meat and cheese plate that included caramelized caraway sweets to a flight of Boreal Gin for him to a lingonberry-lime soda for me. It was a shame we couldn’t stay for the daily tour at 5:30, but a flight of booze and some witty repartee was the most fitting way to end our flying trip to see our Great Lake and I give Vikre thanks for that.

Then, as quickly as we got to the North Shore, we were back in the Twin Cities. I dropped off my friend, picked up my dog, and sat in my loft on the light rail line thinking about the trip as I scarfed down a Big Dipper sandwich from Northern Waters Smokehaus, trying to extend the mini-vacation a little longer. As I savored the unctuous handheld porketta feast, I thought about the last 56 hours. These are the times when I want to repeat an experience like the one I just had. Immediately. For the rest of my life. I get an urge to own. And, if all my stars aligned, I actually could own a piece of Breezy Point Cabins on Lake Superior through the concept of “fractional ownership.” Or, do what is more accessible to more people and rent it. However it happens, I plan to be back for a longer stay. That’s for sure. And I can’t wait for the next “go time.” ■

## CREDITS:

### Breezy Point Cabins on Lake Superior

[www.breezyonsuperior.com](http://www.breezyonsuperior.com)

### New Scenic Cafe

[www.newsceniccafe.com](http://www.newsceniccafe.com)

### Gooseberry Falls State Park

[www.dnr.state.mn.us/state\\_parks/gooseberry\\_falls](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_parks/gooseberry_falls)

### Split Rock Lighthouse

[sites.mnhs.org/historic-sites/split-rock-lighthouse](http://sites.mnhs.org/historic-sites/split-rock-lighthouse)

### Naniboujou Lodge

[www.naniboujou.com](http://www.naniboujou.com)

### Devil’s Kettle at Judge C.R. Magney State Park

[www.northshorevisitor.com/attractions/state-parks/judge-magney](http://www.northshorevisitor.com/attractions/state-parks/judge-magney)

### Grand Marais

[www.visitcookcounty.com/communities/grand-marais](http://www.visitcookcounty.com/communities/grand-marais)

### Angry Trout Cafe

[www.angrytroutcafe.com](http://www.angrytroutcafe.com)

### At Sara’s Table Chester Creek Cafe

[www.astccc.net](http://www.astccc.net)

### Duluth - Canal Park, Park Point Beach

[www.visitduluth.com](http://www.visitduluth.com)

### Northern Waters Smokehaus

[www.northernwaterssmokehaus.com](http://www.northernwaterssmokehaus.com)

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# THRIFTY TRAVELER

## HOW TO SEE THE WORLD WITHOUT BREAKING THE BANK

BY SHANE LUECK

Friends, family, and acquaintances frequently ask Jared Kamrowski how he affords to travel so frequently. “We don’t have a ton of money and people have this notion that we are too young to be able to travel as much as we do,” he confesses. “I have to explain how we book most of our flights and hotels using points and miles, which we primarily earn through credit card sign-up bonuses. After a while we had friends of friends contacting us wanting to know how to do this.”

Creating a site was an easy way to answer everyone’s questions in one place. As someone who spends a lot of time on the road for his work as a CPA, the founder and editor-in-chief of Thrifty Traveler ([www.thriftytraveler.com](http://www.thriftytraveler.com)) knows a thing or two about how to navigate airports and hotels.

“I’m not a fan of sitting in my hotel room watching TV,” Kamrowski says. “Building the site seemed like the best use of those nights away from home. I’m passionate about travel, photography, and technology. It’s a great fit.”

With a full-time job as a CPA, Kamrowski says most people don’t realize Thrifty Traveler is actually just a hobby of his and contributor Nick Serati. “I wake up daily at 5 a.m. to start posting and then write more after work. It’s like working two full-time jobs, but it’s a passion project and I love the work.”

“I got into the ‘points game’ back in 2009, when I started traveling for work,” he continues. “I stumbled on the Points Guy’s site in 2011. His site focuses on credit card travel rewards, and he’s one of the major inspirations for Thrifty Traveler.”

Credit card rewards is only one component of Thrifty Traveler, with the majority of the site’s content being flight deals and other travel tips and news. According to Kamrowski, the focus is really “to show people that no matter what stage in life or financial situation you are in, you can make travel a priority.”

“I never realized how many people are looking to save on their next trip,” he shares. “I’ve



received emails from people who are doctors, travel agents, broke college kids, and empty nesters. Everyone is looking to save money on their next trip, regardless of how much money they have. Knowing how and where to find the best deal can be tough. That’s where Thrifty Traveler steps in.”

Thrifty Traveler lists eight to ten flight deals daily, while also posting travel tips, points and miles redemption guides, and up-to-date insider information on the best ways to save money on trips. Kamrowski highly recommends readers sign up for the daily newsletter to never miss a post. Minnesota residents with a bit of wanderlust have extra incentive to visit the site: there is no better site to find a cheap flight out of Minneapolis since Thrifty Traveler features at least one deal from Minneapolis almost every day.



(Top to bottom) Lake Tahoe. Vieques, Puerto Rico. Saint John, U.S. Virgin Islands. Photos by Jared Kamrowski



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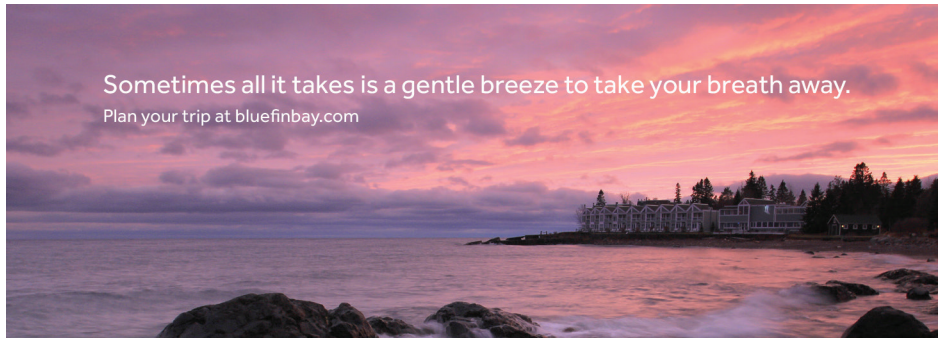
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(Clockwise from left) Berggasthaus Aescher-Wildkirchli, Switzerland. Sheraton Hacienda Del Cabo – Cabo San Lucas, Mexico. John Lennon Park – Havana, Cuba.  
Photos by Jared Kamrowski

“The idea that you can get the best deal booking flights at 3 a.m. on a Tuesday morning, or some other random time, rarely works,” Kamrowski says. “Whoever came up with those articles was looking for clickbait. The big thing is to avoid booking too close to your day of departure. That’s when fares can become very expensive. We recommend booking two months before a domestic flight and three months before an international flight.”

For those who can’t help but book last-minute, there is still hope. Kamrowski’s thrifty tip: “Sun Country features weekly last-minute fares on their website every Tuesday morning. They’re unbeatable.”

Kamrowski suggests avoiding flying Frontier or Spirit unless you know how all the fees work. “It might appear cheap up front but, after all the fees, you’ll likely be paying more than you bargained for,” he advises. “We recommend flying Southwest or Sun Country if you’re looking for a budget carrier. Both fly out of Terminal 2 at MSP, which is less congested and more comfortable than Terminal 1.”

While flights deals are by far the most popular part of the site (the number one post is “How to Book the Cheapest Flight Possible”), the site features plenty of other content to help readers save on their next trip. One of Kamrowski’s personal favorites is “How to Book the Best Seat Possible,” since, as he says, there is nothing worse than booking an expensive flight and being stuck next to the bathroom the whole time.

Interestingly, Thrifty Traveler didn’t start with flight information. Instead, the site launched in April 2015, with an “American Travel Guide to Cuba.” Kamrowski visited Havana the month before and, because Cuba is unknown and mostly uncharted territory for Americans, the article has been a big hit (he recommends visiting soon before it gets overrun with tourists).

Other popular posts on the site include everything from “Top 6 All-Inclusive Resorts You Can Book with Points” to “Never Pay Another ATM Fee Again” and “10 Tips to Cut your Travel Time.” ■

## 8 TRAVEL TIPS FROM THE THRIFTY TRAVELER

1. Google Flights is the best way to find the cheapest flight deal. I use it to find almost all of the flight deals on the site.
2. Avoid exchanging money at the airport; it’s usually a terrible exchange rate.
3. Get a debit card with no international ATM fees. My favorite is offered by Schwab. A Schwab High Yield Investor account can be opened online for free and has no ATM or foreign transaction fees anywhere. You’ll never have to pay an ATM fee again.
4. Check out Airbnb before booking a hotel. You can save quite a bit over staying in a hotel.
5. Uber works in most major cities around the globe. Use it to avoid confusion and possibly over-paying for a cab.
6. Stick to credit cards which feature no foreign transaction fees.
7. Use public transportation whenever possible. We always try to take the subway or trains when we arrive at a destination.
8. When making debit or credit card purchases in foreign countries, always pay for items in their local currency. You may be asked if you want to pay in dollars or the local currency. You’ll get a much better conversion if you pay in the local currency.



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# 2016 Volvo XC60



There has been a lot of talk about Volvo lately.

From an ebb that almost threatened the car maker's existence, sales have turned around on the basis of new and exciting products. The XC90 SUV earned its share of kudos for 2016, namely the North American Truck/Utility of the Year, along with nods from *Motor Trend* and the Texas Auto Writers Association. The trophy case in Gothenburg, Sweden has never been full in its history.

The next wave of new Volvos is set to arrive within the next few months. The S90 flagship sedan and the V90 wagon will join the XC90 as the latest focal points for the brand. Early word on these two new vehicles has been extremely positive, even calling them true rivals to established luxury models in the same class.

*Lavender* magazine has been part of the conversation. Last year, we reviewed the Volvo S60, followed up by the S60 Inscription earlier this year. Both vehicles have been on the forefront of a turnaround for Volvo that enabled the Chinese-owned Swedish automaker to go forward with its future plans worldwide.

However, if you study Volvo's sales numbers, you will find something that is both interesting and quite expected. While the XC90 has won its share of accolades, it has sparked the sales re-

bound at Volvo. Yet, it is not the volume seller as you might think it should be. The S60, along with the long-wheelbase Inscription and Cross Country models, also saw sales rebounds. Yet, it has not been the model being pushed out of their showrooms at great volumes.

The truth is that another SUV is the one sparking sales at Volvo here and elsewhere. It is true with almost every car brand these days; crossovers remain the biggest driver of sales overall. Again, we are not talking about the award-winning XC90 here. We are talking about a product that has been around for quite some time and seen in great numbers everywhere we drive.

The Volvo XC60 is a common sight throughout our readership area. They are standard bearers in various neighborhoods from South Minneapolis to Wayzata, Blaine to Stillwater. XC60s pop up just about everywhere, it seems.

There is something about being popular. So, we were curious as to why the venerable XC60, and not the newer and flashier XC90, is Volvo's best-selling vehicle worldwide today.

First off, the XC90 plays on a different level than the XC60, due to its higher price point and size. Whereas, the XC60 is right in competition with some of the hottest vehicles in its class (the BMW X3, Audi Q5, and Cadillac XT5) its

size is perfect for its owners, usually parents or couples with pets, activities and lives outside of work. This is why you see a lot of them around here.

The XC60 is a handsome vehicle. Admirable is another term for it. This one sits tall with a proper ride height for an SUV. The recently updated "wide grille" look helps the XC60 by keeping it fresh. The silhouette sweeps back to an angular rear end framed by tall taillight assemblies and a wide tailgate. It is a signature Volvo look that has attracted its owners for the past eight years.

As much as we were excited about the transformation of Volvo's interiors in the XC90, there is really nothing wrong with the XC60's cabin. It simply works, with its keypad arrangement below the Sensus screen, the switchable instrumentation binnacle and Volvo's familiar controls.

This XC60 came with "contour" seats with plenty of bolstering and support. Even with the durable hide, the cushion lacked the deep bolstering found on the seat backs. However, the entire cabin is spacious, even in the second row. Headroom is high, which means adults will find a good seating position inside the XC60. Cargo space is expansive stretching out to 67.4 cubic feet with the rear seat backs down. The cargo



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Sensus is the name for Volvo's infotainment system. It is quite extensive, including media playback, HD Radio, SiriusXM, app playback, and a modem. It is not touch screen controlled, but rather by the knobs and buttons below the screen. Once you master it, it is quite good to work with. HarmanKardon provided beautiful sound throughout the cabin.

The current XC60 offers three engines. The T5 front-wheel drive model has the 240 horsepower 2.0-liter Drive-E turbocharged four-cylinder engine. Selecting the T5 with all-wheel drive bumps the engine up to the tried-and-true 2.5-liter turbocharged in-line five-cylinder with 250 horsepower on tap. However, our T6 tester comes with only one engine choice regardless of whether it has front- or all-wheel drive. Underneath our tester's hood is a 302-horsepower 2.0-liter turbocharged and supercharged four-cylinder Drive-E engine. There is only one word that can describe this engine: perfect.

Perfect? If you combine this engine with the smooth-shifting and responsive eight-speed automatic transmission and a very good all-wheel drive system, you have a quick, fast, and powerful SUV on your hands. There is no lag from ei-

ther the supercharger or the turbocharger upon even hard throttle response. Fuel economy is about par for its size and class. We averaged 22.1 MPG in our care.

In driving the XC60, there are definitely some elements of familiarity with other crossovers and SUVs that it exhibited. There is a pronounced "tall" ride equal to its ride height and ground clearance. The ride is not as floaty or bouncy, but very controlled, which is what one should expect from a vehicle of its type. Handling does fall on the soft side with some roll and lean when pushed.

Turning the XC60 offers some tight maneuvering with a quick and responsive steering set. Steering response appears to be numb, although on-center feel has a bit of looseness to it. Otherwise, it is a solid steering system designed to get out of trouble quickly. That is the same for the braking system, with a strong pedal feel and response. Stops are solid in both normal and panic situations.

It is not a Volvo without the ultimate in safety engineering and technology. This starts with the XC60's Intellisafe system, which includes advanced active safety features such as the Blind Spot Information System, City Safety automatic front braking, adaptive cruise control, and

so forth. The point being is the XC60 continues to provide its occupants a safe place to be in any incident. As a result, the XC60 won the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety's Top Safety Pick Plus award for 2016.

Pricing for the Volvo XC60 starts out at \$36,600. Our tester, which included the Platinum package, came with a sticker price of \$52,605. In the premium SUV realm, this is about right for such a vehicle with its equipment level.

As Volvo's best seller, the XC60 is quite competitive against its rivals. The advantages of advanced safety and solid design are main attractions to this SUV. Yet, consumers yearn for a simplified infotainment system and maybe some better road manners. They would be missing the point of the XC60. This Volvo is favored because it is the safest and perhaps the nicest finished vehicle in its class.

Volvo is in a transformative period in their history. Though the attention is spent on more expensive and advanced designed vehicles, such as the award-winning XC90 and the upcoming S90 and V90, their bread and butter lies with the XC60. It is a vehicle with which you simply cannot go wrong. That is worth keeping the conversation going. ■

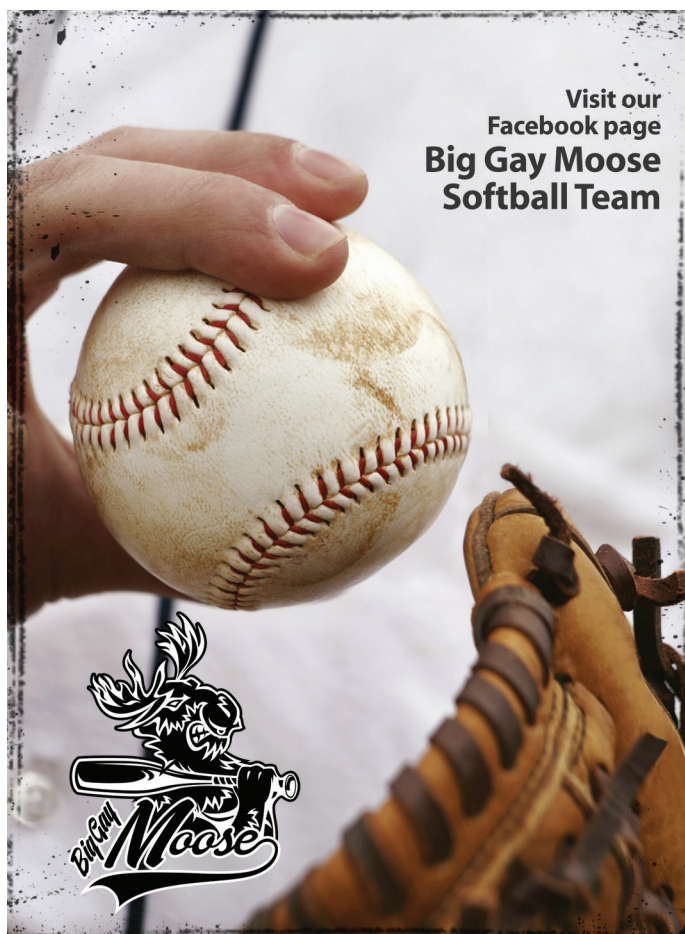


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(612) 824-LIFE (5433) [www.aliveness.org](http://www.aliveness.org)

#### Indigenous Peoples Task Force

Servicing Individuals living with HIV/AIDS  
Offering Case Management services, FREE HIV testing and educational groups

1335 E. 23rd St  
Minneapolis, MN 55404  
(612) 889-4636 or (612) 719-2540  
[www.indigenouspeoplesf.org](http://www.indigenouspeoplesf.org)

#### MN AIDS Project - AIDS Line

Statewide referral service for HIV information & resources including testing, care services, education around PrEP.

2700 Territorial Rd.  
St. Paul, MN 55114  
Metro: (612) 373-AIDS, Statewide: (800) 248-AIDS  
[mapaidline@mnaidsproject.org](mailto:mapaidline@mnaidsproject.org)  
<http://www.mnaidsproject.org>

#### Park House

Day health / mental health treatment program for adults living with HIV/AIDS.

710 E. 24th St., Ste. 303  
Minneapolis, MN  
(612) 871-1264  
[www.allina.com/ahs/anw.nsf/page/park\\_house\\_home](http://www.allina.com/ahs/anw.nsf/page/park_house_home)

#### U of MN HIV Research Studies

Looking for HIV+ and HIV- individuals to participate in research studies.

420 Delaware St. SE  
Minneapolis, MN 55455  
(612) 625-7472  
[hiv.umn.edu](http://hiv.umn.edu)

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#### Twin Cities Quorum

Your GLBTQA chamber of commerce working to invigorate, build & partner for a diverse business community.

18 N. 12th St., Ste. 3606  
Minneapolis, MN 55403  
(612) 460-8153  
[www.twincitiesquorum.com](http://www.twincitiesquorum.com)

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600 Weir Dr.  
Woodbury, MN  
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[crosswindsmn.org](http://crosswindsmn.org)

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(651) 645-0478  
[www.familytreeclinic.org](http://www.familytreeclinic.org)

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(National Alliance on Mental Illness) Providing free classes and peer support groups for people affected by mental illnesses.

800 Transfer Rd. #31  
St. Paul, MN 55114  
(651) 645-2948  
[www.namihelps.org](http://www.namihelps.org)

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(612) 729-2543  
[www.qlibrary.org](http://www.qlibrary.org)

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#### Minnesota Historical Society Sites & Museums

Make the Minnesota Historical Society's 26 historic sites and museums part of your vacation plans. [www.mnhs.org](http://www.mnhs.org)

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#### Radio K 770

Radio K is the student-run radio station of the University of Minnesota

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610 Rarig Center  
University of Minnesota  
Minneapolis, MN  
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30 E. 10th St.  
St. Paul, MN  
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[www.HistoryTheatre.com](http://www.HistoryTheatre.com)

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(612) 371-5656  
(800) 292-4141  
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[mnoopera.org](http://mnoopera.org)

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[chorus@tcgmc.org](mailto:chorus@tcgmc.org)  
[www.tcgmc.org](http://www.tcgmc.org)

### VocalEssence

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[www.agcmcc.org](http://www.agcmcc.org)

#### Central Lutheran Church (ELCA)

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333 S. 12th St.  
Minneapolis, MN  
(612) 870-4416  
[www.centralmpls.org](http://www.centralmpls.org)

#### Edina Community Lutheran Church

Upbeat, growing congregation committed to inclusion, justice, peace, community and proclaiming God's YES to all.  
4113 W. 54th St.  
Edina, MN  
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[www.eclc.org](http://www.eclc.org)

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[www.firstunitarian.org](http://www.firstunitarian.org)

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797 Summit Ave.  
St. Paul, MN 55105  
(651) 227-6311  
[www.hohchurch.org](http://www.hohchurch.org)

### United Methodist Reconciling Churches

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[www.mnrcumc.org](http://www.mnrcumc.org)

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Minneapolis, MN  
[www.tcgsl.org](http://www.tcgsl.org)

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## ADVERTISER INDEX

<b>Adult</b> MegaMates ..... 50	<b>Grocery Stores</b> Whole Foods Market ..... 23	<b>Media &amp; Communications</b> Radio K 770 ..... 9
<b>Arts &amp; Entertainment</b> Commonweal Theatre ..... 37 Electric Fetus ..... 17 Hennepin Theatre Trust ..... 15 Park Square Theatre ..... 17	<b>Health &amp; Wellness</b> Mill District Dental ..... 5 Northland Therapy Center ..... 6 Parkside Dental ..... 17 University of Minnesota, Infectious Diseases ..... 5	<b>Optical</b> Origins Eye Clinic ..... 9 <b>Pet Products &amp; Services</b> Downtown Dogs ..... 19 International Wolf Center ... 37 The Canine Club & Spa ..... 3
<b>Automotive</b> Borton Volvo ..... 43 LaMettry's Collision ..... 43 Morrie's Luxury Auto ..... 41 Rosedale Chevrolet ..... 43	<b>Home Furnishings &amp; Accessories</b> FrameWorthy ..... 7 Merriment Adornments ..... 9	<b>Real Estate &amp; Rentals</b> Builders Association of the Twin Cities ..... 2 Richardson, Beth ..... 9
<b>Bars &amp; Nightlife</b> 19 Bar ..... 13 eagleBOIbar ..... 13 Gay 90's ..... 13	<b>Home Services</b> Garlock-French Roofing ..... 11 House Lift Remodeler ..... 7 Select Surfaces ..... 17 Standard Heating & Air Conditioning ..... 27 Trinity Exteriors ..... 39 Zen Windows ..... 15	<b>Restaurants</b> Al Vento ..... 21 Burger Moe's ..... 23 French Meadow Bakery & Café ..... 21 Jakeeno's Pizza & Pasta ..... 21 Blue Plate ..... 23 McCoy's Public House ..... 21 Melting Pot, The ..... 23 Red Cow ..... 27
<b>Beverages</b> Lowry Hill Liquors, Lakeside Wine & Spirits ..... 27	<b>Insurance</b> Bartell, Dawn ..... 6 Ron Strychar, Horizon Agency ..... 17	<b>Travel &amp; Accommodations</b> Barkers Island Inn ..... 39 Bluefin Bay ..... 39 Glensheen Mansion ..... 39 Odyssey Resorts ..... 33 The InterContinental Hotel .. 37 Vista Fleet Duluth Cruises .... 37
<b>Casinos</b> Fond-du-Luth Casino ..... 35	<b>Jewelry</b> Max's ..... 19 Scheherazade Jewelers ..... 45 Shane Co. .... 29, 52 Wedding Day Diamonds ..... 9	
<b>Events</b> Lavender First Thursdays .... 51 Lavender's Score Thursdays 51	<b>Event Venues &amp; Services</b> D'Amico & Partners ..... 21	
<b>Financial</b> US Bank ..... 11 Wells Fargo Bank ..... 7	<b>Legal</b> Bortel Firm, LLC ..... 10 Heltzer Law Office ..... 5 Jerry Burg, Attorney at Law ... 6 Robichaud & Alcantara, P.A. .... 21	
<b>Gifts</b> Fantasy Gifts ..... 44		



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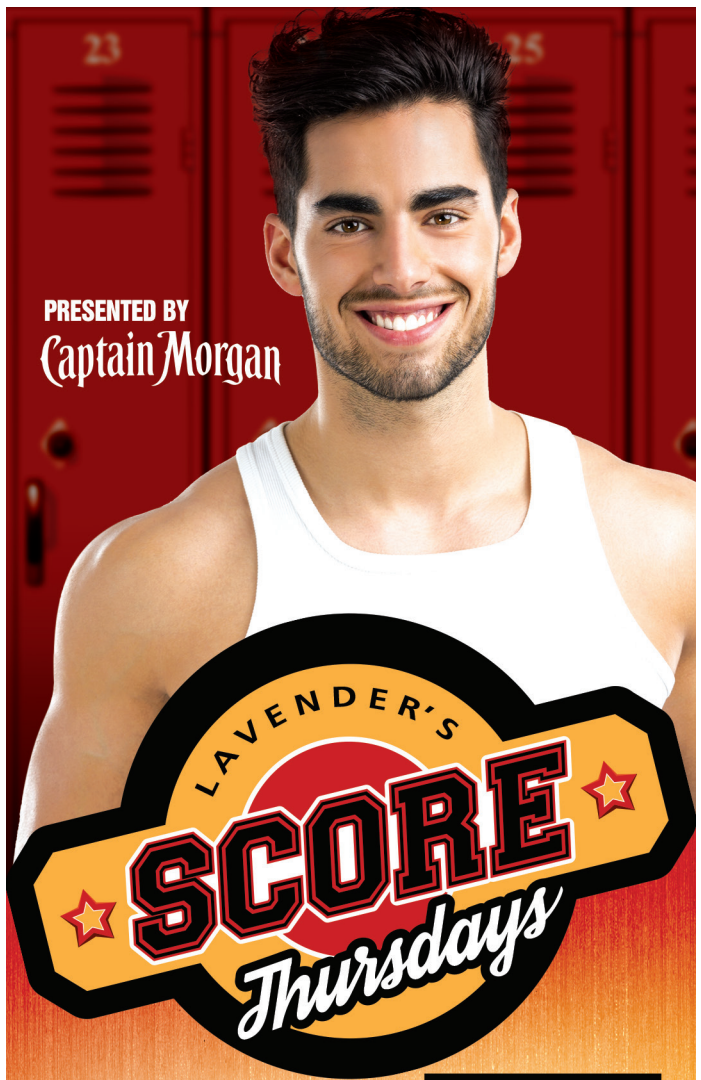
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